

Message Text

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ACTION AF-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 INR-10 NSAE-00 PM-05 NSC-05
SP-02 SS-15 /048 W
-----116354 081610Z /75
R 081040Z JUN 78
FM AMEMBASSY BANGUI
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 300

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E.O.11652: N/A
TAGS: PEPR, CT, US
SUBJ: US-CAE RELATIONS -- FAREWELL CALL ON FOREIGN MINISTER

REF: BANGUI 1257

1. IN MY FAREWELL CALL ON FOREIGN MINISTER GBEZERA-BRIA JUNE 7, I EXPRESSED MY PERSONAL GRATITUDE FOR THE CLOSE WORKING RELATIONSHIP WHICH WE HAD MAINTAINED REGARDLESS OF THE PARTICULAR STATE OF OUR RELATIONS. I THEN WENT BRIEFLY OVER THE POINTS I HAD MADE TO THE PRIME MINISTER (REFTEL), CONCLUDING BY SAYING THAT MUCH REMAINED TO BE DONE TO DISPEL A CERTAIN RETICENCE IN WASHINGTON WITH REGARD TO THE CAE AND THEREBY CREATE AN ATMOSPHERE IN WHICH OUR RELATIONS COULD FURTHER IMPROVE.

2. THE FOREIGN MINISTER REPLIED WITH WHAT AMOUNTED TO AN APPEAL TO THE UNITED STATES TO COME TO THE AID OF MODERATE AFRICAN STATES THREATENED BY A CERTAIN "UNSCRUPULOUS" POWER WHICH ALREADY HAD A STRONG POSITION IN WEST AFRICA AND IN THE HORN OF AFRICA AND WAS IN THE PROCESS OF FOMENTING TROUBLE IN CENTRAL AFRICA, I.E. IN ZAIRE. IN OUR BILATERAL RELATIONS, HE THOUGHT THAT FRANKNESS WAS IMPORTANT AND SAID THAT THE CAE WOULD NOT HESITATE TO COMPLAIN IF NEED BE. HOWEVER, THE PAST WAS PAST, AND OUR RELATIONS HAD IMPROVED AFTER THE INCIDENTS OF LAST YEAR. INDEED, IN SPITE OF THESE INCIDENTS, THE US HAD REMAINED ONE OF
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THE CAE'S MOST PRIVILEGED FRIENDS. HE SAW A CONTINUED IMPROVEMENT, PROVIDED OF COURSE THERE WERE NO MORE INCIDENTS. HE NOTED THAT I HAD PROPOSED MORE CONTACT BETWEEN CENTRAL AFRICANS AND AMERICANS AS ONE WAY TO ELIMINATE MISUNDERSTANDINGS. HE AGREED, BUT ADDED THAT THIS WOULD TAKE TIME, AND MIGHT BE BETTER LEFT FOR A FEW YEARS.

3. COMMENT: MOST OF WHAT THE FOREIGN MINISTER SAID WAS A REPLAY OF WHAT THE PRIME MINISTER HAS SAID TO ME OVER THE PAST FEW DAYS. HOWEVER, HIS FINAL COMMENT INDICATES THAT MY NOTE OF CAUTION IS BEGINNING TO GET THROUGH AND THAT AT HIS LEVEL AT LEAST THERE IS AN UNDERSTANDING OF THE PROBLEMS INVOLVED IN ATTEMPTS TO PUSH HIGH LEVEL VISITS TOO SOON.
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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 jan 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: FOREIGN RELATIONS, DIPLOMATIC DISCUSSIONS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 08 jun 1978
Decaption Date: 01 jan 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 20 Mar 2014
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1978BANGUI01287
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: N/A
Expiration:
Film Number: D780239-1148
Format: TEL
From: BANGUI
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1978/newtext/t19780683/aaaactjt.tel
Line Count: 69
Litigation Code IDs:
Litigation Codes:
Litigation History:
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Message ID: 4a3d408f-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Office: ACTION AF
Original Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: 78 BANGUI 1257
Retention: 0
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 18 apr 2005
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 2444534
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: US-CAE RELATIONS -- FAREWELL CALL ON FOREIGN MINISTER
TAGS: PEPR, CT, US, (GBEZERA-BRIA, MICHEL)
To: STATE
Type: TE
vdkgvwkey: odb://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/4a3d408f-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
Sheryl P. Walter
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
20 Mar 2014
Markings: Sheryl P. Walter Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 20 Mar 2014